

GEM Permaculture Design Certificate Course Evaluation November 28 – December 9, 2005

1. What did you like most about the course?

- Geoff's anecdotes, photos, drawings of real world experiences in on-the-ground Permaculture application. Efficient 2 weeks to learn Permaculture - jump start!
- Excellent info about hope and things can be done to remediate our current unsustainable lifestyle.
- It affirmed some things I know, greatly expanded what I know (learned). Got me excited to take some "risks" in what I do.
- We really could not have had a better instructor! Fantastic! The expansiveness and global perspective Geoff and Nadia bring was priceless. We are very fortunate.
- The small group size that facilitated interaction and the "user friendly" atmosphere that did not set the expectation that we all knew a lot about Permaculture.
- The fact that course content is the cutting edge of real sustainability. It is the most vital, vibrant and useful information I have ever studied.
- Described how clear and simple putting a Permaculture system can be; very encouraging; great pictures; relaxed yet I learned more than I ever have in this amount of time.
- The subject of the course, the instructor and the participants.

2. What did you like least about the course?

- Textbooks. As references they are fine to look up specific details. Geoff's teaching style without heavy use of texts was fantastic. We all learned a lot from him, not the texts.
- This course was substantially better than most university courses that I have had, and the best educational experience that I have had in over 20 years! No complaints.
- The setting. Staying in the Comfort Suites, which is a nice space, but sterile and impersonal. The food was not very healthy. I would have preferred a more applied setting, I guess we will just have to design and build one.
- The room we met in was terrible. It's hard to sit for such long periods in such an uncomfortable room. Snacks were not healthy.

- Time of year, hands-on, outdoor activity in warm weather would have been useful. Hotel setting was probably better than Univ. classroom (☺) but could have been improvised by more aesthetic location. No hands getting dirty - need to build something because you feel so motivated to do something.
- The location of the course. The non-hands on environment. A lot of Permaculture ethics could have been taught through how the course was set up, for example the food served, the silverware used, etc.

3. Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

- Hands-on would be great to reinforce practical lessons... but winter is a good time for this 2-week activity... with spring and summer ahead to work n diploma activities on the ground.
- It would be great to have some hands on experience if there is enough time.
- More personal and social time in the evenings. See # 2.
- Require some kind of group action as a condition of signing up for the course. The "action" can be decided by the students during the course.
- Hands-on
- Just need a hands on facility
- See above. I don't think having Mark Shepard come talk was too appropriate. I feel that another time yes, but I feel he interrupted Geoff's teaching style. Mark Shepard can come anytime; Geoff was only here for 2 weeks.

4. Did the course professors make a positive contribution to your learning experience?

- Absolutely, the instruction was inspirational and at the same time practical. The broad experience internationally was a profound plus.
- Absolutely, Geoff was a wonderful teacher who had so much experience and anecdotes that made the course captivating and interesting despite having to cover such a large vol. of information in such a short time.
- Absolutely! Stories of experience helped illustrate points.
- Absolutely! A quantum leap in learning.

- Yes because of the experience and level that Geoff, Nadia and Mark had. Mark added some interesting local knowledge.
- We couldn't have been exposed to a better person in the world to teach this course. I feel very grateful I had the opportunity to study with Nadia and Geoff.
- Yes, his experience enabled us to learn the right and wrong way to do things, and the simple and elaborate methods to use.
- Yes Geoff did a great job. I do not feel that Nadia contributed much to the course. The one time she did teach I appreciated her point of view and teaching style. I think she should have taught more.

5. How do you plan to apply what you have learned?

- Implement some design features at home. Organize future GEM Permaculture Design courses; network & facilitate volunteer group to sustain and grow the effort.
- In my own house and property; in all of my projects.
- Changes to our existing property. Changes in the way we teach others. Changes in some of the ways we operate our business.
- I will be teaching courses in Jan. & February in Minnesota and Northern Wisconsin. Also I will continue to consult and organize the Midwest Permaculture Collaborative. We are already working on setting up demonstration sites and a Permaculture Institute.
- I like that Permaculture can be applied incrementally so I can begin to apply it in different dimensions in my life. I eventually hope to teach and perhaps consult - but that's top edge.
- In Phases. By concept. By applying techniques to my own place. And by passing the information on to like-minded people thru teaching and creating a model system (working, permanent) for example.
- Start by practicing techniques in my own property & those I know until I feel experienced enough to teach the course around the country and world-wide.
- I plan to start with modifying my lifestyle through more applied Permaculture ethics. Also forming a local Permaculture group.

6. Additional comments?

- Venue was very comfortable and conducive to learning. The small group size was terrific - good camaraderie and flexible to follow Geoff's examples worldwide.
- Thanks to everyone who made this possible. Well worth my time and money.
- Bring these instructors back again, for sure!!
- Thank you
- Great Course!